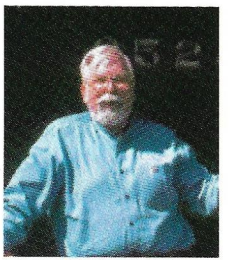
Charles "Chuck" Lind earns MMR 310

Chuck cannot remember a time when he wasn't fascinated by trains. Some of his earliest recollections were that of his mother taking him into Chicago, the day after Thanksgiving to see the Christmas displays in the windows of Marshall Field's. On these trips they rode the Chicago Aurora and Elgin trolley into Chicago. The trip on the trolley was as big a thrill as the destination. It was on one of these trips that his mother purchased a wooden train set for him, which started his fascination with trains. He still has that set. Little did his mother know what she had initiated.

His father later purchased a Lionel train set, mounted it on a board to put it under the Christmas tree complete with a village. With constant use of the train, and not wanting it to be just a once-a-year thing, his dad and Chuck started building a layout in the basement. This layout was added to and operated for many years until his next stage of growth in trains.

Bruce Nelson, a lifelong friend since grade school, was also into trains—but he was using HO model trains. Chuck liked the more realistic look and the fact that you could build more into an area. So the Lionel trains were sold (big mistake) and HO engines, track and rolling stock were purchased and this new phase of his hobby began.

His uncle Ole liked trains and greatly contributed to his collection of rolling stock with their Saturday trips to the local hobby shop where he was allowed to purchase one kit. He also received guidance from the adult members of the Valley Model Railroad Club where he and Bruce were members throughout their junior high and high school years. During these years he was modeling the Milwaukee Road because that is what ran through the area. Later he started moving towards modeling logging railroads. Two events happened. He received a copy of the book "Shortline to Paradise," which was about the Yosemite Valley Railroad, and his local hobby shop put a brass climax engine into the display case.



After many weeks of looking over the small vertical boiler climax the proprietor made Chuck a deal. He put the $39.00 brass engine on a lay-away for him. He doesn't know how long it took him to pay it off, but many lawns were cut. With high school ending the trains were packed up and put in storage in his uncle's attic as he headed off for college in Texas.

After college, on a trip back to Illinois, he picked up those boxes of trains and slowly started to get back on track in Texas. At this time, he decided that he

Continued on Page 20

Achievement Program

Continued from Page 6

would move to modeling only logging railroads. In modeling logging many of the structures and rolling stock he wanted were non-existent so he started scratch-building to fit his needs. It is one of the areas that he still enjoys most.

A move to Lewisville, Texas, and answering an ad looking for model railroaders gave him another life-long friend, John Smith. John was working at Bobbie Hall's Hobby House at this time and knew several of the local modelers, which they visited over the many years.

One of those modelers was Jim Finley. They would visit him and he gave Chuck many tips on how to improve his scratch-building, building a railroad for operation, along with many hours of great stories about working with John Allen. Many weekends and several trips were spent chasing trains with John and Phil (another Lewisville modeler).

A logging layout was built and things were going fine when a job offer from the Texas Agricultural Extension Service moved him to Texas A&M University in College Station. He was starting to build another logging layout when another friend, Bob Clark, moved from HO logging to On3. Chuck gave him a hard time about it and he resisted. But after seeing the detail that could be built into the models, he finally saw the light and 30+ years of HO modeling was sold off.

While he and his wife, Laurie, had a part time train business, Tall Pine Model Railroading Supplies, they met many excellent modelers and have formed many friendships. Recently they made the decision to close the business so he could have more time to "play" trains. He is a Life Member of the NMRA and a Lone Star Region Life Member. He continues to compete in contests with some of the finest modelers anywhere. He has also been active in the Houston Narrow Gauge Cartel, an On3 modular layout. It is through the work on the cartel and the friends he has made that he was encouraged to continue work on getting his MMR.

The Tall Pine Lumber Company now has a new home in a 25'x30' building in his back yard where he will continue to build his logging empire. "This hobby has given to me more than I could ever give back. I have a list of life long friends, too long to list here, that I have formed over many years in the hobby."

Chuck has earned Achievement Certificates in Master Builder Motive Power, Master Builder Cars, Structures, Scenery, Model Railroad Engineer Civil, Association Official and Model Railroad Author.